prepare a comprehensive revival plan for long term viability of the company. The consultants have since submitted their report. And a comprehansive proposal for the revival of the plant is under consideration.

Special Import Duty on Seconds and Defective items of Steel

2443. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:
SHRI PARAMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an expert group on steel has recommended imposition of special import duty on seconds and defective items and a hike in import tariff on certain types of steel;

(b) if so, what are those types;

(c) whether Government have considered the recommendation; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A working Group had been set up by Government to study the present slow down in the steel sector. The Group has since submitted its report. The recommendations of the working Group, *inter-alia* includes:

(i) To consider feasibility of converting ad valorem rate of import duty into fixed duties on certain finished steel items.

(ii) To consider a combination of measures comprising levy of special import duty on imports of seconds and defectives along with raising duties for certain types of steel upto World Trade Organisation bound rates.

(iii) To consider removal of imports of Seconds and Defective below a specific floor price from OGL.

(iv) Establishing a fast track mechanism, to deal with cases of dumping under the Customs Tariff Act.

In accordance with the recommendations made by the Group, Government has recently announced floor prices for import of seconds and defectives in respect of the following steel items to restrict their import, at low prices:

1. HR. Coils (TMQ)
2. H.R. Sheets
3. C.R. Coils
4. Tinplates
5. Electrical Sheets (CRNO)
6. Plates
7. Alloy Steel Bars & Rods (Hot Rolled in Coils)

Funds for Steel Projects

2444. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether financial institutions have agreed to provide funds for the completion of on-going steel projects in the country, as reported in the Hindustan Times dated the 20th November, 1998;

(b) whether any terms and conditions have been imposed by the FIs in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof and response of steel companies thereto;

(d) how many steel projects have so far been cleared by Government in private sector indicating their financial involvement/exposure and likely additional capacities projected during 1998-99 in million tonnes; and

(e) whether the Industrial Development Bank of India has agreed to provide any financial guarantee in this regard to FIs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (c) The Financial Institutions have agreed in principal, to consider need based support including minimum additional fund required by deserving and viable steel